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ABSTRACT

This paper offers an overview of existing services for divorcing individuals and their children, and focuses specifically on one model of divorce counseling. Emerging trends are identified as the monograph addresses the practical, financial, emotional and social services now offered in the U.S. The bulk of the document is devoted to the format, dynamics and techniques of a specific model for conducting a divorce adjustment group. The model allows unstructured time for divorcing individuals to release and discuss feelings, and describes preventive exercises which foster individual growth. A brief discussion of counseling services for children comprises the last section of the monograph. (Author/BP)

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DIVORCE COUNSELING

by

Sheila Kessler

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FOREWORD

Every counselor needs a succinct, reliable, substantive source for updating knowledge in specific areas of interest. Available resources, however, seem to be either too short to do much more than create awareness of new developments, or too long to allow time for reading and digesting the contents. The CAPS Counselor Renewal Series is intended to fall somewhere between these two extremes--to provide highly focused publications on top-priority topics that require an hour or so to read but, we hope, have the capacity to stimulate many hours of reflection.

A typical Renewal provides a brief overview of the area, details trends and new developments, and provides specific procedures for utilizing the ideas and resources. Called "Renewals" for their role in updating counselor skills, they are equally useful in introducing counselors to areas in which they desire to develop new competencies.

The 1977 CAPS Counselor Renewal Series addresses four areas that counselors nation-wide have identified as being of interest and importance: assertiveness training, counseling for divorce, counseling women for non-traditional careers, and writing state plans to coordinate the delivery of guidance services. We list these in no particular order; the last, although the type of reader may differ, is as critical to counselors and their functioning as the first.

In the first monograph, two young CAPS staff members, Helen L. Mamarchev and Marian P. Jensen, both of whom exemplify assertiveness in its most positive sense, culled from the burgeoning literature on

assertion training the most informative and usable resources, annotated and classified them according to a standard set of criteria, and created what we think is an original and immensely useful Resource Chart. At a glance, readers can pinpoint material targeted toward their specific needs--needs that concern type of client, type of setting, type of content, film, book, pamphlet, or whatever. The manuscript itself is liberally sprinkled with examples that translate the principles of assertion into believable reality. The result, we believe, efficiently condenses a large, unwieldy number of resources into a readable, information-laden, succinct, and practical package that will excite the reader's interest and motivate further exploration in this challenging field.

Our survey scouts informed us that resources for teaching skills in marriage counseling appear to readily available to counselors but that material for counselors who wish to be of help to divorcing individuals is singularly absent. We weren't sure of the difference, but our own search of the literature corroborated the need; it also identified an author, Dr. Sheila Kessler, whose name is practically synonymous with divorce counseling. She taught us the difference. Her fine monograph presents a model for conducting divorce adjustment groups, with details about format, techniques, and preventive exercises for individuals experiencing the trauma of divorce. We have one caution for readers who wish to utilize the model. The profound emotionalism of the issue requires an extremely sensitive leader, and such groups should be organized only by persons who are highly trained in facilitative skills. With that out of

the way, let us say that for experienced facilitators, the model can be used as is or easily adapted to their unique requirements. For those who are less confident about their ability to conduct such groups, even just reading the monograph will heighten awareness of the problems experienced by divorcing individuals and clarify areas in which counselors may wish to build skills.

One day soon women firepersons and civil engineers won't cause us to blink an eye, but right now we are still trying to break down attitudinal and occupational barriers in ourselves and in the young women we counsel. Dr. Caryl K. Smith, Dr. Walter S. Smith, and Dr. Kala M. Stroup have developed a program to help us do just that, and we contracted with them to share it with us. The monograph that they prepared presents not one but five alternative approaches from which counselors may choose to encourage young women to enter nontraditional occupations. Zeroing in on one of these methods, or combining them in whatever way seems appropriate, will provide counselors with the theory, resources, and activities they require to respond to the needs of virtually any client group. The annotated resource list, classified for easy referral, is a real bonus that serves to extend the usefulness of an already highly practical publication.

The fourth Renewal had its seed in a national conference we conducted this year for state supervisors of guidance and other prominent guidance leaders. Dr. William J. Erpenbach, who had been working for some time on developing a State Plan for the State of Wisconsin, agreed to prepare a

manuscript that would clarify questions about Federal legislation and present guidelines for those of us who are or will be involved in developing organized plans for our own state. Much overlap and confusion now exist at the state level in the delivery of guidance services, and we herald this publication as one that is truly needed--especially since the enactment of Public Law 94-482, legislation that may have more potential for affecting the future of guidance than any law heretofore enacted. Whether you are directly involved in bringing order and cohesion to your state's coordination efforts or simply wish to become more knowledgeable about the big picture in guidance, we think you will find this monograph a rich source of useful information.

Great credit is due the authors for their work in preparing the monographs according to the broad specifications originally outlined by us, and later, to more detailed content and editorial suggestions. Others, however, contributed to the publications. We would like to thank Stephanie Gordon for creating the original illustrations for the monograph covers. And we wish to acknowledge the superior craftsmanship of Pat Wisner, our typist, who cared as much as we did that the final product be as perfect as possible.

The real worth of a publication can only be judged by outcomes afforded the user, not by its format, by its title, or by the care and effort expended in its creation. Reviewers and those who informally field-tested the Renewals have reacted very favorably to them, finding much of merit in what they have to offer. This response has made us optimistic that

those who read and use the monographs will profit in new insights, refurbished skills, and challenging ideas that excite experimentation. Renewal is a heady experience. We hope these Renewals will provide that for you.

Garry R. Walz and Libby Benjamin

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Sheila Kessler is an Associate Professor at Georgia State University in Atlanta, and Director of the National Institute of Professional Training in Divorce Counseling. She began her intensive involvement in divorce counseling and research in 1972 while on the faculty of the University of Nevada. From this work she has evolved a model of divorce counseling that has been shared with thousands of professionals nationally and internationally.

Author of *The American Way of Divorce*, Dr. Kessler also created the award winning American Personnel and Guidance films, *Divorce: Part One* and *Divorce: Part Two*. She is on the editorial board for the *Personnel and Guidance Journal*, is a book editor for the *Journal of Divorce*, and her publications have appeared in the *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, the *Journal of Clinical and Child Psychology*, *Personnel and Guidance Journal*, the *Single Parent*, *New Woman*, and the *Gerontologist*.

ABOUT THIS MONOGRAPH

Divorce counseling has only recently become an acknowledged field of endeavor in the mental health profession. Hungry for services during an often-traumatic time, the divorcing individual has forced many counselors to update and upgrade their knowledge of the divorce process.

The purpose of this monograph is to provide an overview of existing services for divorcing individuals and children, as well as to zoom in on one model of divorce counseling. The need for divorce counseling is well-documented in the beginning of the monograph by the mounting divorce statistics and the lack of previous information and services. Emerging trends are then identified as the monograph addresses the practical, financial, emotional, and social services now offered in the United States. The bulk of the writing is devoted to the format, dynamics, and techniques of a specific model for conducting a divorce adjustment group. This particular model allows unstructured time for divorcing individuals to release and discuss feelings, and describes preventative exercises which foster individual growth. These structured, strategic interventions enable the divorcing person to enhance coping, awareness, and expressive skills in such issues as: (1) letting go, (2) communicating with the former spouse, (3) helping children work through their feelings of divorce, (4) confronting faulty assumptions about divorcing individuals, and (5) resurrecting rusty social skills.

A brief discussion of counseling services for children comprises the last section of the monograph. While only a few such services are extant at this point, it is hoped that learning about them will generate ideas and the desire to learn new approaches in elementary, junior high school, and high school counselors.

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DIVORCE COUNSELING

Sheila Kessler

NEED FOR DIVORCE COUNSELING

Most people approach divorce with dread, and their worst fears are often justified. Friends may disappear. The church may turn its back. Parents may apply emotional hooks to try to reverse the destined divorce. The adversarial judicial system may attempt to pit the couple against each other in court. While all of these negatives may not apply to any one case, most persons going through divorce attest that the process is chaotic, ambiguous, emotion-filled, and sometimes downright degrading.

The grandfathers of marriage and divorce statistics, Hugh Carter and Paul Glick, estimate that nearly "40 percent of all married couples under middle age in 1975 are likely to have their marriages end in divorce" (1976, p. 397). That does not mean that 40% of all married couples will divorce in any one year. It does mean that the probability of a couple's having a lifelong marriage in modern times is only 60%. If divorce trends continue, the probability of permanence is likely to plunge even more.

In 1976 in the United States there were over two million marriages and over one million divorces (U.S. Public Health Service, 1977). The marriage to divorce ratio in urban centers like Atlanta, Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Detroit, Chicago, Houston, Dallas, and Washington, D.C. was even higher than the national average, i.e., ten

marriages for every seven divorces (Kessler, 1976). The divorce rate in the U.S. has more than doubled in the last 15 years (Carter & Glick, 1976). Possible causes for this rapid increase are suggested in the section on the social context of divorce.

To most Americans divorce is no longer an abstraction. Its effects touch most of our lives. If we haven't had first hand experience with it, chances are good that a close friend or family member has.

Need For Services

The need for services during divorce is evidenced by both self reports and national statistics. A sample of 96 families (both intact and divorced) revealed in interviews, diary mood ratings, and personality tests that divorcing persons feel more anxious, depressed, angry, rejected, and incompetent the year following divorce than do persons from intact families (Hetherington et al., 1976). Carter and Glick (1976) comment on the relatively high rates of accidental deaths among divorced persons:

> Widowed and divorced persons probably tend to be much more preoccupied with their adjustment problems--and have less help in solving them--than married persons and hence may tend to be more vulnerable to serious mishaps, self-inflicted wounds . . . (p. 349).

This observation is documented by the fact that white divorced persons have four times the suicide rate, seven times the homicide rate, and nearly six times the accident rate of married persons (Carter & Glick, 1976). Nonwhite contrasts between divorced and married persons are not as great.

The need for services is mirrored in less dramatic ways as well. In my experience as a back-up consultant for the Reno telephone Hotlines, I would estimate that over 80% of our crisis calls involved the break-up of a relationship. Most counselors, no matter what age group they are serving, have had experiences with children who need to talk about the experience but feel they have nowhere to go, adolescents that are reluctant to discuss it with their friends, and parents who desperately need a listening ear.

Lack of Previous Information and Services

Yet we know very little about divorce. In the scientific and psychological community, divorce as an issue was a sleeper until 1974. More books and articles have been written on divorce in the last 2 years than in all the previous centuries combined. Only one large-scale study has been done on the effects of divorce on people. That one study was undertaken in Detroit in 1948 and focused only on women (Goode, 1956).

Churches, mental health professionals, and legislators in the past frequently have abandoned a person at the point of divorce rather than extending a service. Morton Hunt wrote in his article, "Help Wanted: Divorce Counseling," that a New York legislature had done just that by offering a service to help save marriages but not one to deal with divorce. "To expose divorce counseling would be tantamount to saying that divorce is as valid and as moral an alternative to marital conflict as conciliation" (1967, p. 15). This somewhat neglectful, perhaps even

punitive, attitude towards services has been replaced by a nascent awareness that divorce trauma and scars can be minimized by services without advocating divorce.

Professional training for counselors in graduate school concerns itself primarily with socially sanctioned human exchange, i.e., building intimacy, enhancing communication, bettering parent skills, resolving conflicts. Training falls short when the human skill counters our cherished beliefs, and few graduate schools offer any help on transition counseling, divorce counseling, or even sex counseling.

EMERGING TRENDS IN SERVICES

Services for individuals in divorce have begun to emerge in the various legal, psychological, religious and social institutions in the United States. These services can best be divided into the practical/financial and emotional/social areas.

Practical/Financial Services

Given that emotional adjustment is integrally tied in with financial security, especially for low income families (Bane, 1976; Goode, 1956; Hetherington et al., 1976), counselors need to be aware of how settlements are made and of financial support services (see the section entitled "Additional Resources" at the end of this monograph for further notes on economic resources).

Mediation

Mediation is gaining steam as an alternative to litigation for divorcing couples. Mediation offers an interdisciplinary approach to settling disputes over spousal maintenance, child custody, visitation, and property division. Instead of battling these issues out in court, or having lawyers distort a couple's needs, a neutral third party sits down with the couple and helps them to resolve fairly and rationally the areas of conflict. Thus, mediation helps people to take responsibility for their own settlement. Australia has utilized mediation in its Family Court system for the past three years.

Although currently mediation is, for the most part, extraneous to our legal system, the technique is being used in some areas. Borrowing from the Family Mediation Center in Atlanta, Georgia, the American Arbitration Association in New York City has created a family dispute area. In much the same way that labor leaders negotiate with management or community leaders negotiate with government, so do divorcing couples negotiate their differences. A divorcing couple can call the local branch of the American Arbitration Association to obtain the services of a trained mediator.

Mediation is also found to a limited extent in several U.S. Conciliation Courts. Conciliation Courts are court-affiliated programs which offer mediation and counseling services to litigants. Most Conciliation Courts are funded by local charities, county or state agencies, or sometimes Federal grants. Such courts now exist in Alaska, Arizona, California, Canada, Hawaii, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Oregon,

Washington, and Wisconsin. In many Conciliation Courts, judges use counselors to help a couple divide its assets. Meyer Elkin, former Director of the Family Counseling Services of the Conciliation Court in Los Angeles, has written an informative article about the virtues of this process (Elkin, 1973). The National Association of Family Conciliation Courts invites mental health professionals to become involved in developing local support for court-affiliated counseling and mediation.

Financial Services

One of the most common problems reported by divorcing persons is money (Goode, 1956). Over half the population in a study by Weiss reported that they worried about money most or all of the time (Weiss, 1976). In 1974 the mean income in male-headed families was $13,788; in female-headed families, $6,413 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1975). This same report reveals that over 60% of the children under 6 in female-headed households fall below the poverty level.

Nonpayment of child support seems to be a major complaint among women. Even though they can be cited for "contempt of court" if they default on payments, many errant spouses simply disappear across state lines. Enforcement proves too expensive and futile for the custodial parent. No national statistics are available on the percentage of husbands who default on child support payments, but one study in Wisconsin found only 13% of the fathers still making required payments at the time of the study (Eckhardt, 1968, p. 473).

Several government organizations have come to the (minimal) aid of these single parent families in desperate economic straits. The joint Federal-state public assistance program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, gave financial help in 1974 to over 3.2 million families, of which over 85% were headed by women (National Center for Social Statistics, 1974). Many Federal and county governments now have a Child Support Enforcement office to help women track down a nonpaying spouse. The Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act (1975) allows for garnishment of the wages of a nonpaying spouse, if he/she happens to work for the Federal government.

Emotional/Social Services

Deciding on and enforcing concrete settlement issues are not the only concerns of divorcing persons. Also available are services that respond to personal, social, and emotional needs of individuals experiencing divorce. Under this emotional/social rubric fall the following types of services: buffer groups, counseling groups, and therapy.

Buffer groups

Buffer groups are different from counseling groups and therapy in a number of ways. They are generally larger in size, appeal to social and educational needs, and have a lecture/discussion format. The essence of buffer groups is learning about and sharing significant issues. Frequently these buffer groups will invite speakers and then have subsequent small group discussions about the topic area.

Parents Without Partners is perhaps the largest and best established of these buffer groups. Activities foster individual and parental growth and include camping, picnics, group discussions, social dances, and educational programs. Parents Without Partners offers a monthly magazine, "The Single Parent," and a yearly convention, and has chapters throughout the world. The organization welcomes both custodial and noncustodial parents.

The We-Care organization of San Diego, California is designed specifically to deal with individuals' social and educational needs. We-Care invites singles, divorced, widowed and other interested parties to its weekly meetings and extra curricular activities. The lecture/discussion format is supplemented by additional services. This buffer group is mainly found on the West coast. Similar buffer groups are found in Montgomery, Alabama (One Inc.); Phoenix, Arizona (Single Scene); Portland, Oregon (Solo); and many other cities.

Churches are now offering similar services to divorcing individuals all over the United States. Divorce Lifeline, a Presbyterian-based service originating in Seattle, Washington, has sponsored many worthwhile programs in community and professional education. The Catholic church has done likewise via its Divorced Catholics groups. The Unitarian church in Atlanta has received some recognition for its "Pain" group which meets weekly. In Orlando, Florida an interdenominational group called "Epicenter" is headed by a Methodist minister. Seminars for the divorced run eight weeks and cost $40. In 1976 the United Methodist Church published four

rituals for divorce in its 128-page book Ritual In A New Day: An Invitation.

Robert Weiss takes an educational tack in his "Seminars for the Separated." Topics for the eight weekly seminars include: (1) the emotional impact of marital separation, (2) continuing relationship with husband or wife, (3) reactions of friends and family, (4) changes in parents' relationships to their children, (5) how the children react to parental separation, (6) starting over, (7) dating and sexual relations and (8) review and evaluation (Weiss, 1975, p. 312). Other seminars on divorce include those offered by the Family Service of Galveston, Texas (Divorce Adjustment Seminars); by Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan (Changing Life Styles); and by Sangamon State University, Springfield, Illinois (Divorce Seminars).

Counseling Groups

Sandwiched between buffer groups and therapy in depth of commitment and involvement for the individual are counseling groups. Almost all involve a small group process and are led by a qualified counselor/therapist/social worker. Some are theme centered discussions, some are unstructured counseling groups, and others are skill-building workshops.

Esther Fisher, a New York lawyer-therapist, calls her group a "Counseling-Education" group (Fisher, 1974, p. 136). The group meets once a week for ten consecutive weeks. Each session is organized around a theme such as sex, friends, women's roles, maturity, or the meaning of the family.

The Divorce Counseling Service in Washington, D.C. and the Divorce Adjustment Institute in Chicago, Illinois, provide both drop-in services and unstructured groups for those experiencing divorce. This unstructured counseling approach is also used by James Morris and Mary Prescott in their University of Idaho Counseling Center (Morris and Prescott, 1975). In these unstructured groups topics for discussion evolve spontaneously from the needs of group members. Eight weekly sessions seem to be the most common format.

Structured packages of divorce counseling are provided by Kessler and Krantzler. Kessler's structured model, "Beyond Divorce: Coping Skills for Adults," is described in detail later in this monograph (1977a, 1977b). Mel Krantzler (1974) has developed a structured divorce counseling program entitled "Creative Divorce." Unlike the skill-building approach used in the "Beyond Divorce" program, Krantzler's group utilizes an educational format.

Therapy Groups

Last in the category of emotional services are therapy groups. Very little has been written about divorce therapy. Perhaps the most comprehensive study is a survey of 21 New York area therapists who engage in divorce counseling (Kressel and Deutsch, 1976), including James Framo, Richard Gardner, Arnold Lazarus, and Laura Singer. In their descriptions of strategies used in divorce therapy, many of these therapists felt that the term "divorce therapy" was too narrow to portray accurately the depth of the therapy. The modal case described in this therapy had a median duration of two years and median income of $30,000, and divorce issues

were only one part of the entire personality reorganization involved in such therapy. Issues addressed by the therapists were: (1) reducing the level of emotional tension; (2) clarifying the real sources of anger; (3) shifting the focus from other to self; (4) relabeling accusations, encouraging positive interactions; (6) enforcing physical separation; (7) regulating contact with lawyers; (8) clarifying sources of marital dysfunction; (9) explicating the historical roots of marital conflict; and (10) encouraging fairness in divorce.

SOCIAL, LEGAL, EMOTIONAL CONTEXTS OF DIVORCE

Divorce does not occur in a vacuum. Before a counselor embarks on divorce counseling, he/she should know something about the societal, legal, and religious context of divorce. Divorce counseling can easily be sabotaged by any one of these institutions. Punitive attitudes of a coupled community, court battles, and/or exclusionary behaviors of fellow church members are good examples of such sabotage.

Social Context

It is beyond the scope of this monograph to delve deeply into the social context of divorce in the United States. Suffice it to say that we have been historically intolerant of divorce in both attitudes and laws until the last decade. Before the Revolutionary War in the U.S. and in accordance with British marriage laws, it took an Act of Parliament to

get a divorce. Alexander Hamilton in 1774 presented the New York legislature with a bill that accepted only adultery as a ground for divorce and denied the right of remarriage to the guilty party (Time, 1976, p. 61). South Carolina until a few decades ago disallowed divorce (it is interesting to note that this is the only state that made provisions for the amount of property a husband could will to a concubine). Another result of the tight divorce laws was that southern newspapers carried almost as many advertisements for runaway wives as for runaway slaves. The Catholic church still disallows divorce and does not allow remarriage after divorce.

While social and religious tolerance has increased, our emotional intolerance still leaks out subtly in phrases used to describe divorce. Many of the words put out by the popular press have heavy "gloom and doom" connotations. A February 1977 article in the Ladies Home Journal (Olds) says, "the divorce fever seems to pick off marriages like some medieval plague" (p. 81). A March 12, 1973 article in Newsweek magazine entitled "The Broken Family: Divorce U.S. Style," states that "the pain is still blinding, the rupture is still brutal. The desolation of the broken family has become no less stark." Even professionals reflect this morbid tone. Esther Fisher in her book Divorce: The New Freedom (1974) writes, "Divorce is the death of a marriage: the husband and wife together with their children are the mourners, the lawyers are the undertakers, and the court is the cemetery where the coffin is sealed and the dead marriage is buried" (p. 16).

The tragic wording does not help to lighten the load of those going through divorce. The following statement is one that I have heard from

many clients mirroring the remorse and tragedy they are expected to feel: "I don't really feel guilty, but I feel guilty about not feeling guilty." Most adult clients now divorcing have been inculcated since childhood with deeply emotional feelings about traditional marriage. These imply exclusiveness, monogomy, and permanence. When the vows "Till death do us part" end in divorce, they often experience a feeling of failure.

Contrast this with other cultures. The Eskimos call divorce "deactivation" of marriage. Brazil allows no divorce because the state and the church are united against it. Yet, in Rio de Janeiro in the last several years there have been more legal separations than marriages. One Brazilian psychiatrist I interviewed in Rio said, "Marriage is like a garden party." On the other side of the world in Australia, a person's social reputation does not seem to be marred by divorce. When I inquired of counselors at the family court in Melbourne, Australia as to whether a divorcing person experiences discrimination, the reply was, "Discrimination, what do you mean? Divorce here is looked upon as a neutral fact of life."

Counselors must take care not to get caught in the ignorance, myths, assumptions, and unchecked stereotypes surrounding divorce. Counselors also need to beware that clients can fall into this value trap. The assumption that "Divorce = Failure" seems to be peculiarly American and does not necessarily hold true in other societies.

While most researchers, authors, and newswriters describe divorce as a catastrophic problem in American society, a few writers have dared to suggest that divorce offers a solution to other societal problems.

Future Shock (Toffler, 1970) has become a household word. Over 20% of the American people move every year, thereby becoming uprooted from social buffer networks and removed from censorship of long term friends and family. Life-span has increased from 47 years old in 1900 to 74 years old in 1976. Thus, the number of years one spends in adult life has almost doubled. The average number of children per family in 1900 was 5, while in 1976 it was 1.86. Women have expanded their self concepts to include more than the mothering role and have moved in droves into the labor market. Thus, they are not as dependent on the family unit for survival. Increased life-span, dramatically decreased child rearing years, increased choices for women in the work force, and mobility are softening the glue that once held the American family together. More and more American couples are insisting that emotional needs be met within marriage as well as physical and economic needs. In fact, many younger couples are changing their vows "Till death do us part" to "Till love do us part."

Deeper understanding of the heritage of our feelings about marriage and divorce can be obtained by reading Divorce in the Progressive Era (O'Neill, 1967), The American Way of Divorce (Kessler, 1975), or Women in Divorce (Goode, 1956). Other books provide interesting cross-cultural camparisons: Marriage Stability, Divorce and The Law (Rheinstein, 1972), and Divorce and After (Bohannan, 1971).

Legal Context

Counselors need to have at least a cursory understanding of family law in order to help clients. The following questions are good checks to see if counselors have minimum knowledge of their state laws:

1. What are the grounds for divorce in this state?
2. What is the difference between a "no-fault state" and a "no-fault ground"?
3. Is sexual behavior during marriage and after separation considered in determining child support payments and/or custody?
4. How does a person retrieve child support payments that are not paid?
5. Can the custodial parent take the child out of state?

Many clients will ask their counselor for a legal referral. It helps to have a list of likely lawyers on hand for that purpose. Just as counselors vary in their specialities, so do family lawyers. One lawyer may specialize in a "therapeutic divorce" where mediation, fairness, and rational settlement are emphasized. Another lawyer may excel in the tiger approach to divorce combat. Counselors might encourage clients in a group setting to share their various experiences with lawyers so as to effect better referrals. The American Arbitration Association in New York City has recently started a family dispute section to service those who want a "mediated" divorce. This might be an option for clients who want to avoid the game playing, courtroom drama, postponement, and misunderstandings that frequently accompany the adverserial system.

Emotional Context

Research on Divorce Adjustment

Given the prevalence of divorce in the United States, it is somewhat surprising to find very little research on the emotional adjustment of people going through divorce. However, heightened interest in this area has led to projects which are unveiling some of the emotional and practical concomitants of divorce. The following review of the literature is certainly not exhaustive but does include some of the more significant research.

Goode (1956), in a study of 425 divorced women in Detroit in 1948, conducted what is perhaps the most comprehensive research project involving divorced women. Goode found that a woman experienced greater trauma if: (1) the husband suggested the divorce, (2) she had been given little notice, (3) divorce came unexpectedly, (4) she continued to have emotional involvement, (5) she possessed a desire to punish her former husband, (6) she was ambivalent about obtaining a divorce, (7) she disapproved of divorce, (8) family and friends disapproved of divorce, (9) she experienced discrimination as a divorcee, (10) she came from a rural background, and (11) her husband came from a middle or upper class background. Goode also found that the greatest amount of trauma occurred at the time of separation rather than at the time of the final legal decree. Unfortunately, this study has not been followed by one of similar scope.

In another study on the aftermath of divorce, Hetherington et al. (1976) investigated 96 families of both divorced and intact homes.

Multimeasures were used to assess the emotional reactions of parents to divorce. These measures included interviews, structured diary records, and observations of parent/child interreactions. The researchers divided the areas of change and stress into practical problems, self-concept problems, and social life problems. They found erratic eating and sleeping behaviors among both divorced men and women. Men who had participated actively in household tasks and child care during the marriage had markedly less trouble in practical adjustment than men who had not. In the first year following divorce, mothers and fathers felt anxious, depressed, angry, rejected, and incompetent; most of these emotional effects diminished after two years. Initial enthusiasm about a feeling of freedom was also reported by a minority of the sample. Concern over loss of children was the pervasive theme for the fathers, while a feeling of being trapped or imprisoned was typical of the mothers. The authors found that 66% of the exchanges between divorced couples in the 2 months following divorce involved conflicts, while most of the adjustments were tempered at the end of a 2-year period.

In a dissertation dealing with post-divorce adjustment, Raschke (1974) determined the following: (1) the greater the outside involvement with friends and relatives, the lower the stress in divorce; (2) higher scores on the Dogmatism scale were associated with greater stress; (3) greater sexual permissiveness lowered post-separation stress; (4) involvement in religion had little to do with stress; (5) education and socioeconomic level were not related to degree of stress; (6) "orientation to change"

was associated with less divorce stress; and (7) males with higher occupational status experienced less post-divorce stress. Raschke developed a post-divorce stress scale which she used in her research.

Self perception and attitude toward divorce may also make a difference in post-divorce stress. Hunt (1966) postulates, "The formerly married sees or believes about his own case what most affects his . . . adjustment or maladjustment to his new status" (p. 25). In a similar vein, Lauer and Thomas (1976) discovered that when changes are defined as desirable, deleterious effects are minimized. They used "The Social Readjustment Rating Scale" of Holmes and Rahe (1967) which weights various changes such as divorce, moving, occupation, and finances. This scale reveals a significant relationship between the heavily weighted changes and onset of illnesses (pp. 213-218).

Weiss (1975) used an anecdotal approach to detailing emotional reactions of persons in his "Seminars for the Separated." He described the lingering attachment felt by some of his group seminar participants who retained an image of the lost figure and experienced feelings of restlessness, fear, or panic. Weiss compares this separation distress to symptoms exhibited by children who have lost significnt others. On the other hand, Weiss describes feelings of euphoria often reported by those divorcing.

Stages of Divorce

In my own clinical group work with over 600 persons who were going through the process of divorce, I observed a similarity in the experience (even though each person's experience is different). From my observations

I delineated emotional stages that are commonly experienced by those going through a divorce (Kessler, 1975, pp. 19-45). Further empirical research with a broader sample determined the validity of these stages (Kessler, 1976).

Not everyone goes through all of the stages, and the stages occur in varying degrees of length and strength. A person may take three months to go through one stage, or experience three stages in one day. These are emotional stages and therefore are not necessarily chronological.

1. Disillusionment stage. The roots of divorce are in marriage. Disillusionment occurs when two spouses realize there are some very real differences between them, for example, sloppy vs. compulsive housekeeper, strict vs. permissive disciplinarian, social vs. asocial, or public vs. private personality.

   While these differences may sound minor, when they show up in scores of ways in the daily lives of people, they loom large. Repetition = irritation. Disillusionment is the stage where spouses drop the romantic fiction and begin to react more realistically to one another. If spouses do not deal with this stage by negotiating with each other, their dissatisfactions may quietly evolve into the next stage.

2. Erosion stage. Erosion occurs when those quiet irritations become expressed in chipping away at the spouse's ego. The subdued disappointments may leak out in subtle putdowns, sneers, irresponsiblity, or passive neglect.

Spouse A: "How do you like my new outfit?"

Spouse B: (snickering) "Well, it makes you look well rounded . . ."

Spouse A: "What happened at work today?"

Spouse B: "Well, I obviously got a lot more done than you did at home!"

Little by little this stage erodes the self esteem of one or both spouses. Each may begin to think, "What am I getting out of this relationship?" Feelings vary from anger, to distrust, to a growing insecurity.

Both disillusionment and erosion can be handled constructively to deepen the relationship . . . if the couple know how. Expressing and dealing with negative feelings is crucial to resolution of the difficulties.

If a couple can resolve these disappointments and irritations alone or with counseling, the relationship can be recycled back to the beginning of the stages. If not, frequently the next stage sets in.

3. Detachment stage. The emotionality of erosion disappears. Silence replaces fighting. Feelings die. Detachment happens when the predominant three words change from "I love you" to "I don't care." Apathy, ambivalence, anger, and anticipation are all typical of this stage.

Apathy is the most important danger signal in divorce and is exemplified in the following attitudes:

"What's the use of talking. Nothing is going to change anyway."

"I don't see why I should care."

"I just don't feel anything towards him/her."

"It's like my feelings have withered up and died."

We can only speculate as to why people become apathetic toward each other. Perhaps familiarity contributes to disinterest. Losing respect for the spouse's goals, behaviors, or habits also helps to deaden feelings. If one spouse is going through a period of diminished self esteem, he/she may have little surplus energy to love anyone. Prolonged hidden anger may freeze into iceberg feelings. While periods of apathy are normal in any healthy relationship, continued apathy paves the way for divorce. Often extramarital affairs grow out of apathy.

Ambivalence or mixed feelings cloud the detachment stage. One week a person may value security and stability and the intact family; the next week he/she may do an about-face and want to "throw in the towel." The period of vacillation takes a long time if the cost/rewards of a relationship are nearly equal. The balance tips toward leaving when the pain becomes too great.

Anger in this stage is not so much an active or fighting anger, but more an anger of justification. Anger is not used to

express and resolve differences openly, but rather to justify the coming separation. The recipient of the anger, try as he/she might, cannot do enough to appease (much less please) the other spouse. Many times the one moving towards divorce does not understand his/her feelings and behaviors in this detachment stage and is emotionally confused.

Yet little by little the spouse or couple pulling out of the relationship may be taking steps to anticipate or prepare for single life. Private runaway bank accounts, preparation for a new vacation, or flirtations represent ways to test out a single identity while still protected by marriage. Anticipation coupled with intense fear of loneliness may nag a person during this stage.

4. Physical separation stage. The day one or both spouses move is perhaps the most traumatic day of the entire process. No longer is separation an idle thought. It has become real. Some people feel enormous relief--as if they will have some adjusting to do, but the worst is over. Others, less prepared, feel a sharp and severe emotional reaction. How much reaction will depend on the degree of preparation for the separation. Some common phenomena to be observed in physical separation are shock, the emotional yo-yo, turtle-time, fumbling with family and friends, and financial quicksand.

Rapid mood swings after physical separation may make a person feel as if he/she is on the string of an emotional yo-yo--

up one minute, down the next. Mood swings are a by-product of heightened vulnerability. The person may find him/herself more sensitive to feedback, more easily excitable, and more easily triggered to emotions of any kind right after separation.

Turtle-time is the need to draw into one's shell, to regroup one's strength before taking on the new single identity. Some thoughts that manifest the need for turtle-time are:

"I need some time alone--all alone."

"I don't want to go to the party."

"I just want to be by myself."

"I feel like licking my wounds."

Individuals' emotions and/or body will tell them that they need turtle-time, and these signals should be respected.

"Now, how do I tell my family?" This is a tough question for persons who fear harsh judgments from parents and relatives. Many times the anticipation is much worse than the reality. Close friends and family often do not pose too much of a problem because they are usually familiar with the reasons for the break-up. Point: It is most difficult to tell acquaintances and strangers about separation when the divorcing person does not accept it him/herself. If individuals find themselves disguising the separation, they may need to accept the fact that it may take some time to integrate being separated into their self concepts. The deception of hiding separation and divorce for too long uses up a

lot of energy. Letting friends, bosses, family and acquaintances know is one of the signs that one is about to begin redefining oneself as a single.

Money may suddenly become a thorny problem. Adjusting to a lower standard of living may be something the divorcing person is unwilling to face right away. Who wants financial deprivation on top of emotional deprivation? As the emotional drain of separation eases, however, many find that money becomes a less important issue.

5. Mourning stage. Hope lingers. The divorcing individual thinks, "Maybe the other person will change enough so we can make it. Maybe I can take more the second time around." Mourning happens when the divorcing person goes beyond the critical point--the point of no return. This moment often is symbolized by such behaviors as taking off the wedding ring, saying "No" to the former spouse for the first time, coming home from the "final straw" encounter with the former spouse. A person frequently thinks the following thoughts when this turning point is reached:

   "I have got to start looking out for myself."

   "Yes, there may be a little hope left, but there are just too many scars between us to go back."

   "I just made a decision to . . . I am not waiting any longer for _____. I've got to get on with life."

   When this turnabout comes, the stage of mourning usually follows. Mourning means cleaning out the old emotional house so

new tenants can move in. Feelings of the former relationship need to be purged. Inflamed anger may be one way of accomplishing this cleansing process:

"I feel used! Suddenly I woke up and saw what a raw deal I was getting!"

"Why should I put up with that ##//!!?"

Underneath the anger may lie profound sadness over the loss. The loss may contain remaining feelings of love. But more often a person realizes, "I don't have much trouble giving up John/Susan. It's the marriage that I want to hang on to. I really like the idea of the white picket fence, doting spouse. No, we never matched up to that ideal." In retrospect persons may find that they have really been alone for years while married. Separation and divorce force one to admit emotional separation to oneself and others (and often that is not easy!).

Mourning has depth and some people are afraid of that depth. Guilt is one decoy people use to avoid facing the sadness of loss. Persons obsessed for long periods of time with "If I had only . . ." may be using guilt to avoid mourning.

6. Second adolescence stage. Healing is well on its way. Time to break out of the cage! Second adolescence is the stage where people experience a surge of upswing emotions. Any area of deprivation becomes a potential area of intense exploration, i.e., travel, sports, hobbies, clubs, new life styles, sex, dating. No

one around to censure! Many persons report the following:

"I feel just like I did when I was 17 years old. I found myself wondering if he/she would call."

"How do you say no (yes) nowadays?"

"That same feeling of excitement and vulnerability as when I was a teenager came over me last night, and I am 48 years old!"

Overreaction typifies this period. Getting too deeply involved in a hobby. Having too many dates. Having too much sex. Being irresponsible. The overreaction is one way of testing out new limits. People usually start feeling the excess and return (exhausted) to moderation.

The key in second adolescence is the identity question: "Who am I?" and "Who do I want to become?" Many people trade suburban materialistic living for a freer life style. Others trade freedom for more responsibility and commitment. Old friends who reinforce old values and behaviors may be supplanted by new ones who reinforce new values. On the other hand, many divorcing people come to realize what values they treasure and appreciate them more. Goals become more self-chosen, less subject to the influence of others.

7. Hard work stage. Stage 7 is the commencement--the end and the beginning. The end of adjusting to a life transition fades into the beginning of a new life. Receptiveness to intimacy most often pushes aside former distrustful caution.

Usually significant others are involved at this point. Goals have been set and partially realized. Divorcing persons may feel a new confidence, a new depth, a new sense of mastery over their lives.

DIVORCE COUNSELING MODEL FOR ADULTS

This section is devoted to an indepth look at one model of divorce counseling. After a discussion of various types of therapeutic interventions, the process of divorce counseling is described, including the goals. parameters, leadership characteristics, format, dynamics and techniques. This model reflects the opinion and experiences of the author and has evolved from 6 years of working intensively and extensively with the divorcing population. It is the one I have found most effective in mitigating the trauma and augmenting the growth potential in divorce.

The model is entitled "Beyond Divorce: Coping Skills for Adults." The small group process is used throughout as it seems to be the most catalytic and therapeutic vehicle for handling divorce issues.

Therapeutic Interventions

Each of the stages discussed in the previous section has its appropriate therapeutic interventions. As the chart on "Stages of Divorce" outlines, marriage counseling is appropriate for stages of Disillusionment

and Erosion. In both of these stages, the relationship contains enough energy for the therapist/counselor to help the couple build insight, understanding and methods of compromise.

Prolonged detachment means that the counselor may be doing Limbo Counseling. Limbo Counseling is neither marriage nor divorce counseling; rather, it is counseling that deals with the grey zone in between. Limbo Counseling is called for if one or both partners are unsure of marital commitment. This area of isolation along the relationship continuum between marriage counseling and divorce counseling is perhaps the most agonizing for both counselors and clients.

Divorce counseling begins when it is clear that the relationship bond has severed. While a few couples desire continued counseling during this period to clarify issues, help with a practical settlement, or assuage guilt, most divorce counseling is done within a group setting without the presence of the former spouse. The purpose of these groups is to enable each participant to rebuild emotional autonomy, develop a sense of identity, and gain mastery over day-to-day intra- or interpersonal situations.

Process

Goals

Both general goals and specific goals are built into this model of divorce counseling. The general goals are to provide support, identity, and tools for growth for the individual experiencing divorce. Specific goals include value clarification, social skills, and emotional release/

STAGES OF DIVORCE*

STAGES	EXPERIENCE	THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION
1. Disillusionment	Disappointment, Dissatisfaction	Marriage Counseling
2. Erosion	Chipping	Marriage Counseling Bach--Fair Fighting Skills Negotiation Skills Cash in Brown Stamps
3. Detachment	4 A's: Apathy, Ambivalence, Anger, Anticipation	Limbo Counseling
4. Physical Separation	Shock Emotional Yo-Yo Turtle Time Fumbling with Friends or Family Financial Quicksand	Divorce Counseling 1. Emotional Coping Skills 2. Social Skills 3. Practical Problems/Information 4. Passive to Active Approach to Life
5. Mourning	Grief, Helplessness, Relief, Anger	Divorce Counseling 1. Giving up Guilt 2. Gestalt Exercises 3. Divorce Ceremony 4. Focus on Self
6. Second Adolescence	Overreaction Identity Crisis	Divorce Counseling 1. Helping People Deal with Risks 2. Clarifying Real Self Through Overreaction
7. Hard Work	Intimacy with Significant Others Goal Setting	Goodbye!

*Excerpted from The American Way of Divorce by Sheila Kessler, Ph.D., Nelson-Hall, Chicago, 1975.

coping. The interventions are designed to achieve both sets of goals.

Support is one of the primary goals of a Beyond Divorce group. Persons who volunteer for these groups generally feel wounded to some degree by the experience of separation. This heightened vulnerability accentuates the need for support. The group does not employ heavy confrontation tactics, Gestalt bombardment, or even sharp criticism. Rather, the leader models reinforcing behaviors and encourages group members to notice each other's progress and improvements on both emotional and behavioral planes. For instance, one 34-year-old male received wide acclaim when he shared his nervous victory of finally asking a woman for a date, his first date in 14 years. He had been hibernating for 8 months and during the first part of the group had bemoaned his rusty social skills. Another woman, age 44, shared her triumph in being able to approach her day in court coolly and confidently. Group encouragement and support cushioned the risks for both.

Many divorcing individuals, especially those with children, find themselves surrounded by coupled friends. The identity and safety of marriage no longer form a protective shield. One group member summarized this feeling by saying, "I no longer belong in my neighborhood. I feel strange relating to the couples that were formerly our friends. I really feel like the odd person out." A group provides a temporary sense of identity. A divorced individual has a feeling of belonging to something. Alvin Toffler in Future Shock (1970) emphasized the need in our fast-paced society for such transition groups. The achievement of this second major

goal is reflected in some of the comments group members made at the end of the experience: "I felt like this group was a life raft, something I could hold onto during a time I felt like sinking," and "I don't know what I would have done without this group. Before, I felt like I was floundering in a vacuum." The potency of this need for belonging has received little attention, especially during post-divorce adjustment. Yet, I think it provides the glue which binds the group together.

The third general goal for the group is to help persons "grow" rather then just "go" through a divorce. Once in a while a group member will have been married several times. Comments such as, "This is my third divorce. I really need to go back and work on my first one" illustrate the need for prevention. The group is designed to foster intra- and interpersonal tools which persons can carry away from the experience to use in the future.

The specific goals focus on these intra- and interpersonal tools. Value clarification is the first. The purpose here is to help individuals recognize when other people are making assumptions, operating out of stereotypes, and adhering to their own (different) values. One example of this might be a friend saying, "I don't understand why you and George separated. You had everything you wanted--a new house, a new car, a new boat. You are such nice people." While the assumptions implicit in this comment are fairly obvious, the group works on examining more subtle assumptions made by friends, family, and others.

Participants not only enhance their sensitivity to others' assumptions and beliefs but also explore their own. Rigid ideals or entrenched values may trap a person in divorce. The thought, "I have to have someone to

love me," may precipitate panic on a lonely Saturday night. Changing "I have to" to "I would prefer" can be an important accomplishment in curtailing cognitive demons. The unquestioned belief, "Children from single parent homes will end up as juvenile delinquents," or even, "Children from single parent homes are deprived" may cloud the relationship between single parent and child. A single parent may manifest this concern through doting, overpermissiveness, overprotectiveness, or avoidance of the subject of divorce. Examining beliefs and values about marriage, children, and divorce is an important component of divorce adjustment.

The group also teaches social skills. Given, for instance, the situation where an acquaintance makes one of the aforementioned assumptions, how does one confront that assumption while doing the least damage to the friendship? Group members learn to deal with delicate social situations such as communicating with the former spouse while under duress, telling a potential employer about being separated, or letting family know how to respond. These situations are further illustrated in the section entitled "Techniques."

The third area of growth involves developing tools for emotional release and coping. Group members enter the group with such questions as "How can I let go?"; "I hit an all time low two weeks ago and it scared me to death. How can I prevent that from happening again?"; or "I had horrible images of what I'd do to her if I could get my hands on her. How can I make sure I can control my feelings of striking back?" The group spends time learning how individuals can control mood swings, express

difficult emotions, and, most of all, recognize emotions as they are happening.

The above goals represent a comprehensive approach to divorce adjustment. Behaviors, cognitions and emotions are intertwined to formulate a learning package. While people vary in their needs to achieve each of these goals, group members can draw from them the skills and attitudes necessary to overcome their personal obstacles.

Parameters

Group size, composition, and duration are important structural considerations for the counselor. The most effective group size I have found to be between 10 and 15 members. Having more than 15 members impedes group cohesiveness and dilutes individual attention.

The make-up of the group is heterogeneous. Group members usually range in age from 20 to 60. While the problems of the 28-year-old are significantly different from those of the 55-year-old, each can learn from the difference. Group members generally come from diverse social, economic and educational backgrounds. Plumbers, physicians, and secretaries mix easily. Divorce cuts through many status and age barriers by the sheer nature of its emotional commonalities. Having persons of both sexes provides a balance in viewpoints and helps to break down stereotypic thinking through varying testimonials from persons of the opposite sex.

The initial time contract with the group is for 8 weeks. The first meeting is usually on a Saturday and lasts for 7 hours. This marathon meeting helps break the ice and develop trust among members. Subsequent

weekly meetings last about 2 hours. The 8-week commitment has definite advantages for divorcing individuals. Sometimes persons going through divorce do not know where they will be in 4 months. Usually group members will attempt to renegotiate the contract at the end of the 8 weeks. I will usually continue with a group as long as the majority of the members feels the need. If that need extends beyond 6 months, I will usually terminate it. Many groups will continue on with reunions, social group contacts, and group outings up to several years beyond the end of the formal group.

Former spouses are not allowed in the same group. Since the overall goal of the group is to rebuild emotional autonomy, having a former spouse in the group would be counterproductive. Friends are also discouraged from entering the same group. It helps to have shared and equal vulnerability among all of the group members. Sometimes if two friends join the same group, they may use the group to increase their own cohesiveness but do not take the interpersonal risk that others do within the group.

Two firm criteria do exist for admission into the group. One is that the person be physically separated from his/her spouse. While pre-separation persons may attest to the fact that they are going through a divorce process, pre-separation pain and energy are not the same as post-separation adjustment. Persons in this pre-separation period are encouraged to seek either marital counseling or individual counseling. Persons in the group may have been separated a couple of weeks or may have been divorced for years. The group interaction is enhanced by having members at various

stages of divorce. The second criterion is that the person consider divorce to be imminent, even though he/she may have flashes of hope of reconciliation.

Leadership Characteristics

Having experimented with various leadership styles over the years in divorce adjustment groups, I have found certain characteristics to be necessary for effective leadership. Please keep in mind that these characteristics are applicable to a divorce group; other kinds of divorce counseling may require different leadership styles.

First, it is essential that the group leader possess a solid foundation in clinical skills. Divorce counseling should be considered to be a specialization acquired after a counselor has mastered the fundamentals of group counseling. A Master's Degree in the behavioral sciences plus extensive clinical supervision are considered minimal. Beyond that, it is helpful to have direct training in one or several divorce counseling models. Few other areas of counseling have more breadth and depth of scope. The counselor needs to be adequately prepared.

The person doing divorce counseling must also be nonjudgmental and optimistic. That the divorce counselor will be impartial cannot be assumed. Counselors need to be aware of their own deeply rooted values about marriage and divorce. These values are impossible to conceal in divorce counseling. Clients possess heightened sensitivity during divorce and are quick to pick up attitudes of condescension, sympathy, disapproval, overprotectiveness, or overreaction. Clients also are keenly aware of judgmental connotations

in a counselor's choice of words and tone of voice. "Broken home" is sure to trigger a covert (or overt) reaction from a single parent. Counselors who feel that only pathological people get divorced may debilitate rather than rehabilitate those going through the experience.

Clients frequently test these hidden values in groups by expressing anger and making their former spouses appear to be villains. For example, one woman talked at length about how her husband had had an affair with another woman, had beaten her up, and had made perverse sexual demands on her. After listening to her for 20 minutes, it would be easy to assume that her husband was a monster. And the conclusion is even more easily reached if one starts with the belief that in every divorce there needs to be a villain and a victim. Agreeing with her and responding with, "Oh, how horrible!" instead of helping her express her anger can be a dead give-away that the counselor is operating on that assumption. Several group meetings later, the woman in this case shared that she had had several affairs before her husband simply gave up, and he had beaten her in self defense.

The optimism of a counselor relates to his/her ability to look beyond present reactions and emotions to the eventual working through of those emotions, i.e., ability to see divorce as a process rather than as a static event. If optimism is not present, a counselor might interpret the anger and bitterness of a recently separated person as a personality disorder instead of as a natural part of the human process. Optimism is also an asset when clients feel bogged down in depression or experience temporary setbacks.

The strength of the leadership role warrants consideration. Too much power and charisma in a leader only serve to make divorcing individuals feel worse about their lot. The balance of power within a group is sometimes precarious. Lecturing to the group, for instance, about what to expect in divorce or about the percentages of this or that may well cause resentment. Most clients do not want to read or hear about how their depressions and euphorias are classic symptoms of loss, how separation anxiety causes sleeplessness, or how multiple research has dispelled the myth that divorce produces delinquents. They prefer rather to be guided and helped through their own private emotional labyrinth. Restraint is an important part of the leader's repertoire in a divorce group.

Having witnessed scores of clients go through many of the same reactions, I am tempted to let them know the consequences of a certain behavior based on experience with past clients. Yet, this cheats them of the process of discovery. One woman, for instance, had made it clear that her former husband was the primary parent in the family and she was happily involved in her career. At one meeting, however, she made an impulsive decision to fight for the custody of her children. The expected reaction occurred. After 3 weeks of having her children live with her while she was trying to work full time, go to school, and date, she collapsed exhausted and said at the next group meeting, "This isn't what I want. I knew he would be the better parent. I'm not going to continue to fight for custody." Trial and error are a necessary part of the discovery process. Knowing what questions to ask in divorce counseling is more important than knowing the answers.

Balance of power also manifests itself in leader-initiated versus group-initiated structure. Beyond Divorce groups utilize about a 50-50 ratio: Half of the time the leader initiates topics for discussion and specific exercises; the other half of the time the group initiates concerns, joys, and problems individuals want to share. The unstructured, group-initiated part is important for individuals who need to recognize and experience their own power. Comments such as, "I feel helpless. I didn't want this divorce, but there was nothing I could do," reveal the helplessness that some clients are experiencing. Being able to initiate topics and lead the direction of the discussion allows a group member to feel personal control again. This small dose may go a long way to provide strength in a time of need. The leader also is responsible to see that the goals of the group are met. Thus, one leadership characteristic is taking control when necessary but also being comfortable in sharing control of the group with members.

Judicious use of self disclosure is another helpful asset for a leader. Group members will invariably ask whether the leader has been divorced. While it is not mandatory for the leader to have experienced divorce, with this question clients are really asking whether the leader has felt the depth and range of feelings of divorce. Clients seem to appreciate any self-disclosure which unveils the vulnerability of the leader. This does not mean capturing the spotlight by recounting emotional traumas of the past. Rather, it means using self-disclosure to help the group to a more self-disclosing level, to illustrate a point, or

to provide an analogy for what the client is experiencing. Too much revelation of self breeds confusion in clients. Few clients want to burden a counselor who is going through his/her own hell. I would not conduct divorce groups if I were in the middle of the anguish of my own divorce or personal trauma. While that may not be true for all counselors, conducting divorce groups is particulary demanding (and rewarding) and requires full attention and objectivity on the part of the counselor.

Patience also helps. Many clients volunteer, "I feel so easily triggered these days. Anything can set me off." This means that the counselor must be able to work constructively with displaced anger. The counselor must be aware that free floating anger may attach itself to the counselor and should not become threatened by it. That same displaced anger can be turned into an important self-discovery for the client. One way to deal with it is to coax the anger out and wedge under it to explore the causal factors. One man, with a sharp edge in his voice, confronted me with the statement, "I thought you said we were going to meet three more times instead of two!" I asked him gently if he was feeling anger because of the misunderstanding. He elaborated on his feelings of anger and eventually acknowledged his sense of loss, "I have become dependent on the group. I don't want to go through a second divorce by giving up the group." Getting in touch with that feeling of loss and accepting it was an important revelation for him. While displaced anger is a common phenomenon in all counseling, it is slightly more prevalent in divorce counseling because of the frustrations of the separation process.

Format

Screening. While a pre-workshop interview is not mandatory, it can do much to screen out future problems. A telephone interview offers a less time-consuming and yet viable way to do initial screening. Frequently in these brief interviews I find persons who do not realize the criteria for the group and/or are not appropriate for group membership. Other clinical criteria for membership also need to be observed. Borderline psychosis, excessive hostility, or regression in a client may mean that individual counseling is necessary before that person will be able to take advantage of the group. Not meeting the post-separation criterion is the most frequent reason I have found for not admitting a person to the group.

Basic format of each meeting. Each group session is divided equally into an unstructured and structured section. The unstructured format is designed to build two of the general goals, i.e., support and identity. The structured format involves strategic interventions which promote growth and skill building. The rationale behind this combination is based on research I have conducted using various formats (Kessler, 1977c).

Materials. The structured format utilizes both a film and a guide book. The film, "Divorce: Part One," is distributed by the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA, 1976). The booklet, "Beyond Divorce: Participant's Guide" (Kessler, 1977b), describes the group experience for members, delineates the stages of divorce, walks the individual through the various group exercises, and spells out additional resources. An additional resource, "Beyond Divorce: Leader's Guide" (Kessler, 1977a), addresses the experience from the leader's point of view.

Dynamics

While each group has its own personality, the counselor may encounter similar dynamics among various groups. The dynamics are simple manifestations of the adjustment process.

Popular post-divorce paradoxes. The push/pull of post-divorce adjustment may be felt in group dynamics. Members may want strongly to grow and learn, and yet resist the process. Signs of wanting intimacy show up in comments such as, "I desperately miss the intimacy I used to feel with my spouse, but it seems I just can't find it now. I've been to Parents Without Partners once and that didn't work. I tried another singles club once and that didn't work either. One of the people there even suggested that we get together after the meeting, but I just didn't feel like it." Both sides of the ambivalence are equally strong. A group member may desperately want to get involved but will approach a potential intimate relationship with both feet on the brakes.

The yearning for and resisting belonging paradox surfaces in statements like, "I really need a group like the Beyond Divorce group, but I'm not sure I fit. I'm 40 years old and my children have left." Or, "Who's going to be in the group? I've got three kids, and I don't want to be among people who don't have similar problems." The frequency and strength of such questions pinpoint this dynamic which, simply stated, is, "I need to belong, but am I going to be different?" This may occur because the person feels like the odd person out in other areas of his/her life.

The third paradox crops up when a client professes, "Skill building is exactly what I need." But in the inner machinations of the group, that same person may try to detour around any skill building exercises.

External props. While most therapy groups have a strict restriction against coalitions among group members outside of the group, a divorce adjustment group is different. Many of the members want friendships from the group experience. This particular model encourages the development of friendships from the beginning. At the first meeting I give group members a list of each others' names, addresses, and telephone numbers. At the end of the first meeting I suggest, "Feel free to call upon or lean on the rest of the group members during the week for support. If you need an ear at 10 o'clock at night, feel free to give someone else in the group a buzz. Does anyone in the group not want to be used in this way?" No one has ever declined being part of that external support system. Just the knowledge that someone else is available frequently precludes panic.

Permission to be passive. With wildly swinging mood fluctuations during divorce, group members need license to be "temporarily out of commission." From the beginning, group members learn that they can state to the rest of the group, "I really feel passive or low energy today, and I want to sit back and listen." Group members respect this need in one another. This permission allows the individual experiencing passivity or depression to derive comfort from being passively involved with people without any demands being made.

Tension management. Because of the heightened vulnerability of persons entering divorce adjustment groups, tension may thicken the air at the onset. Roughly 70% of group members have not experienced counseling/therapy before, and small group process is an unknown. Some enter the group fearful, deeply hurt by months and often years of spousal rejection. The way tension is managed by the leader in the first few hours is crucial to developing trust and opening the valve of self-exploration. Preworkshop interviews, humor, laying groundwork, attending to physical comfort--these are all part of the techniques employed to increase the comfort level and manage tensions within the group. Tension usually dissipates after the first 3 hours of the first group meeting.

Techniques

Introduction. The best way of illustrating the techniques used in a Beyond Divorce group will be to describe a typical group.

First day: Unstructured format. As mentioned before, the first session meets on a Saturday and lasts from about 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The 15 group members meet in a small room with chairs arranged in a circle. After they are comfortably settled, I immediately have them form pairs and spend about 7 or 8 minutes with each other with the following instructions:

> I'd like you to pair up and share with each other whatever would be helpful for the rest of us to get to know you. You will come back to the group and introduce your new "friend" to the rest of the group. Make sure that you censor anything

that you don't want the rest of us to know. Please include in your introduction what the most difficult part of adjusting to the divorce has been for you.

This exercise usually breaks the ice quickly. Group members develop one ally within the group and also have a safe way for other group members to enter into their lives.

After the introductions, I usually spend about 10 minutes laying the groundwork for the rest of the meetings. This groundwork includes dealing with such housekeeping chores as time and place of meetings, smoking, the Participant's Guide, and duration of the group. I also do some emotional foreshadowing:

> Many of you during your preworkshop interviews were concerned as to whether you would fit in the group. Some of you were younger, some older, some with children, some without. These concerns are fairly normal and common in groups like this. We each have a choice, however, as to whether we want to "count ourselves in" or "count ourselves out." Since we have such limited time in this group, I'm hoping that you will all count yourselves in. Starting with that premise will help insure that you will receive greater benefit from the group.
>
> Having experienced intimacy before, some of you will come to this group with some hunger for that intimacy. My experience has been that this takes time. You may find yourself saying at the end of the day, "I don't feel cured." If

you are patient, you will probably find that the group does serve as a cushion and shock absorber during this experience. You will also find that you are better fortified for the next round.

Each meeting we will start off with an unstructured part where you are free to introduce areas of concern you would like to share with the group. The group will spend about half of the group time responding to these needs. The second half of each group meeting we will use a film to structure some prevention. The film dramatizes actual or potential problem areas during divorce. We will then work with skill building exercises. If you want an idea of what is to come, feel free to read ahead in the Participant's Guide.

In order to warm up to self-disclosure, group members are then instructed to open their Participant's Guide to the Obstacle Check List. The instructions are accompanied by reminders that the answers they put down are private and they do not have to share them with other group members. Examples of items that appear on the check list are: (1) letting go of former spouse, (2) making new friends, (3) forgiving former spouse, and (4) vocational choice. Different marks indicate varying levels of strength of each obstacle. I then ask them what obstacle they consider especially pertinent for them and if there are any others that they want to deal with in the group. This opens up the whole area of expectations

and needs of the group and helps the leader to tailor the rest of the experience for the individuals within the group. At this point it is usually lunch time (1:00 p.m.).

First day: Structured format. Following lunch, we return to work with the "Strategic Interventions." Using the APGA film makes it easier to structure the strategic interventions; however, group members can also role play their own vignettes. The Participant's Guide provides scripts for various vignettes. Not having the film only means that the leader has to be more active in setting up the role playing. It is not within the scope of this monograph to present all of the vignettes that are used in a Beyond Divorce group, but they are described in the Leader's and Participant's Guides. Counselors need to use their imaginations to make these written examples stand out in 3-D (this is where training is helpful).

Scene 1: Who's the culprit?

The vignette is one of two people having coffee together, obviously friends. One person is leaning over, looking very sympathetically at the dejected other party.

Person A: "I just couldn't believe it when I heard that you two were getting a divorce. You both seem so happy. You seem like such nice people. Tell me, whose fault was it?"

Person B: (continues to look down dejected)

End of scene.

I then ask the group, "What assumptions do you see being made?" Group

members will pull out the following assumptions: (1) that nice people don't get divorced, (2) that somebody has to be at fault, (3) that the couple looked happy from the outside. One of the most important assumptions to be drawn from this scene is that of fault finding. I ask the group, "What kind of societal factors do you think contribute to having to find fault?" The group will usually pull in religious heritage, fault finding in the legal realm, punitive attitudes of society towards people who are divorced.

Frequently this discussion will lead into the subject of judgmentalness between spouses in the marriage. For instance, one woman aged 29 admitted, "Both my husband and I were constantly trying to prove that each was right. I would say that strong limits are essential for rearing our kids. He would come back with the fact that I was too uptight." The group members then related the judgmentalness of society to their own lives and looked at how critical they (or the former spouses) were.

The exercise that follows was developed to help people deal with individual differences in a manner that engenders tolerance. Rather than trying to prove who is right and who is wrong, this exercise attempts to provide a nonjudgmental approach to differences. I give the group the following directions:

"Equal But Different" exercise

1. Divide into pairs. (Sex does not matter.)
2. Find a subject about which you get mildly irritated with a significant other and share it with your

partner. For instance, a former spouse may have left socks on the floor and that bothered you. Or maybe your roommate watches television while you are trying to talk to her or him. Do not pick a subject that is all-consuming for you. Try and pick one that makes you mildly irritated. (Give the group about 3 or 4 minutes.)

3. Find a "should" that underlies your anger. For instance, in the first example, a should might be, "A person should be neat around the house." Share those shoulds with your partner.
4. Restate your irritation in an "Equal But Different" way. In other words, phrase the sentence so that the needs of you and the other person are equally presented. An example, "I really like to keep a very orderly house, and my former spouse preferred to be more casual." See if you can take the judgmentalness out of your tone of voice and out of the words you choose. Get some feedback from your partner as to whether he/she heard any judgmentalness in your tone or words. (Allow about 6 or 7 minutes.)

The group then spends about 30 minutes debriefing this exercise. For some people the exercise is easy; they can easily move from irritation to

the nonjudgmental restatement. Several will point out the difference on an emotional level between expressing the irritation judgmentally in the first statement and attempting to neutralize it in the "Equal But Different" statements. This seems to be an important insight for some. For others, the exercise is extremely difficult. Mary, for instance, did not want to give up her irritation and anger. The group helped her explore some of the payoffs for maintaining the anger. She found that she needed outside validation in order to feel secure. For her, having her husband watch television while she was talking meant rejection. After further exploration, Mary realized that her husband would get locked into whatever he was doing and have a difficult time letting go of that preoccupation. Television programs were included. Thus, her anger and rejection at his diluted involvement was partially a function of when she chose to talk to him.

This exercise is valuable in helping persons get in touch with their rigidity about preferences. The stronger the need to be right, the more difficult this exercise will be. The purpose here is not to encourage people to have loose boundaries in preferences, but rather to help them realize that they have a choice. Later in the group, I will pull this exercise out again if I see a person repeatedly blaming the former spouse and yet wanting another way to handle these feelings. This exercise helps a person discover that because feelings are sometimes automatic does not mean that they are fixed or unchangeable. Slowing down and concentrating can help a person reprogram basic reactions. This experience of course, has its roots in rational emotive therapy.

Group members may spend up to 2 hours working through various personal applications of this vignette and exercise in their own lives. The whole idea of having to blame self or blame the spouse for divorce is a dramatic underpinning to feelings of guilt/failure in divorce. "Equal But Different" need patterns may have considerably more impact on disillusion in the relationship than any other factor. Helping a person to recognize the strength of his/her own needs, values, and priorities can enhance the selection of a future mate. In addition, being able to tolerate differences can help that selection endure. When the first vignette is finished, we then move into a second scenario.

Scene 3: Guilt-o-tine

We use the third vignette in the APGA film, "Guilt-o-tine," to illustrate further how strategic interventions are used. This vignette shows a mother on the telephone talking to her daughter. The mother has just heard about the separation.

Mother: "You know, dear, that as your mother, all I want for you is happiness. You have been married only 8 years . . . don't you think if you stuck it out a little longer that you could patch things up? Our marriage hasn't been all that rosy . . . but we stuck it out . . . because of you. We took our vows seriously. Why don't you stick with him . . . you may not find anybody better."

Group members usually do not need to be asked what the feelings are. Several will comment, "Those were my mother's/father's words exactly," or, "It brings up the same feeling in me that it did when I told them about our separation." One woman broke into tears because of the pain that it aroused. The group spends another 30 minutes dealing with feelings engendered by similar encounters with parents and alternative ways they had handled them. One 46-year-old engineer revealed that he had not called his parents back for 2 years after such a telephone conversation. He was just now mustering up enough nerve to face them in person about the divorce. He shared, "My parents are coming to Atlanta in 2 weeks. I've spent the last 2 months worrying about all the flack that I'm going to have to take while they're here. I don't want to be cold and hostile, but I'm afraid I will be. My dad will just ride me the whole time that he is here. They still haven't given up on Sally and me reconciling." Such personal revelations or requests for help in dealing with coming situations ease the group into the next exercise.

"Touchy Topics" exercise

The exercise consists of learning to differentiate assertive responses from aggressive and nonassertive responses. The group then practice this differentiation by writing down and role playing each type of response they might make to the vignette if they were at the other end of the telephone line.

Each group member then chooses a problematic situation to work on. We role play the problem areas, and the group brain-storm assertive responses.

The above two examples represent how the stimulus vignettes are applied to actual and potential snags in divorce. Each of the rest of the ten vignettes has an appropriate strategic intervention built in. The following list provides a general idea of the topic areas covered in the vignettes and exercises: (1) communicating with the former spouse when it is likely to incite destructiveness; (2) increasing self-awareness of feelings as they arise; (3) handling feelings of revenge; (4) setting goals; (5) resurrecting rusty social skills in dating; (6) learning to take interpersonal risks; (7) identifying kinds and strength of needs in intimate relationships; (8) giving up feelings of failure and guilt; (9) identifying areas of personal responsibility in the marital breakdown; (10) gaining practical information about loans, taxes, budgets, and repairs; (11) working through sexual feelings, mores, and self-standards; (12) dealing with the cautiousness of committing oneself to a new relationship.

Attrition is generally extremely low in these groups. Part of the reason for this may be that commitment to the entire process is requested in the screening interview. The other possible explanation may lie in personal satisfaction from the experience, as reflected by the overwhelmingly positive evaluations participants make at the end of the group. Over 80% of the nearly 600 persons who have participated in these groups during the last 5 years have awarded the highest rating to the question, "What was your level of satisfaction with the group?" (10 on a scale of 1-10). The most pleasing reward is to see their continued contact after the termination of the group. Group reunions are very common.

CHILDREN'S GROUPS

So far little has been said about services for children whose families are experiencing divorce. This area is still perhaps the most virgin territory for counselors and mental health professionals.

The need for helping children through the process is evident in some of the research. It is interesting to note that the literature is stocked with articles which show the detrimental effects of divorce on sex role typing, aggression, cognitive development, moral development, and self-control in children (Biller, 1974; Blanchard & Biller, 1971; Felner et al., 1975; Hetherington & Deur, 1971; Hoffman, 1971; Lynn, 1974; Ryker, 1971; and Sciara, 1975). Other studies contradict these findings (Atkinson & Ogston, 1974; Santrock, 1975; Wasserman, 1972). The hidden values of the researchers may show through the deficit-oriented approach to studying family functioning, according to one researcher (Pederson, 1976, p. 461). Few of these studies have examined specific factors of adjustment that may be amenable to manipulation through preventive and therapeutic programs.

Silvern and Yawkey present a more optimistic approach in their article "Divorce: Some Effects on and Teaching Strategies for Young Children" (1975, p. 3). The authors hypothesize that children take on the guilt, sense of failure, feelings of abandonment, and fear of being different and develop various strategies to deal with these feelings, i.e., withdrawal, exhibition or hyperagressiveness, regression to infancy, or

feigning illness. They suggest training parents in how to deal with these anticipated symptoms of adjustment in the child. They also provide tips on how parents can prepare the child for the divorce and how teachers can help children through these feelings.

Several clinical researchers have detailed the dynamics experienced by children and suggested appropriate therapeutic interventions. Based on Elizabeth Kubler-Ross's stages of adjustment to death, Hozman and Froiland have posited a model for counseling children (1976, p. 271). Essentially the model consists of responding to the child in the various stages of denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Kelly and Wallerstein (1977) use several strategies in working with families undergoing divorce. At the preschool level they work primarily with the parents, teaching them specific techniques of communicating with young children and relieving symptomatic behaviors perceived in the child. Kelly and Wallerstein were more likely to work directly with the children in brief interventions from the early latency period on. Three to four sessions was the norm.

Specific therapeutic interventions for children's groups were spelled out in two separate models. Wilkinson and Bleck (1977, p. 205) described an elementary school level model that utilized eight 45-minute sessions intended for groups of six upper-grade elementary level children. The model utilized warm-up to self disclosure; group psychodrama; a Guidance Associates filmstrip, "Understanding Changes in the Family: Not Together Anymore" (undated); puppet plays; and discussion.

A model for preadolescents and adolescents was presented by Kessler and Bostwick (1977d). This 8-hour small group experience set goals of: (1) exploring values/assumptions about marriage/divorce; (2) recognizing, expressing, and coping with emotions surrounding divorce; and (3) developing specific communication skills for handling delicate divorce situations. The format was small group discussion, role-playing, sentence completion, and demonstration. The group used the APGA film, "Divorce: Part II," for skill building and awareness training. Component parts of the model are found in the guidebook, "Beyond Divorce: Coping Skills for Minors" (Kessler & Bostwick, 1977e).

FUTURE

The veil of professional ignorance about divorce has been lifted. Both research and models for services have emerged from recent efforts of interested sociologists, counselors, and psychologists. Much more longitudinal and objective research needs to be done in order to define further the causal factors, developmental effects, and appropriate therapeutic interventions in divorce.

With the topic out in the open, stigma against divorce is likely to decrease. The second-class-citizen feeling reported by divorcing persons may indeed be replaced by a genuine emotional respect for individual life style decisions.

Does that mean that the family unit is going out of style? Not necessarily. Even with the skyrocketing divorce statistics, Carter and Glick (1976, p. 398) report that marriage has never been more popular. In modern times only 4% of our population never marries, as contrasted with 10% in 1920.

Innovations in how we approach marriage will undoubtedly have the most impact on how we deal with divorce. Margaret Mead has suggested "trial marriages" with a 3-year renewable contract for childless couples. This would quite probably reduce divorce statistics. Couples are increasingly taking this route without legal (or social) sanctions by living together. Since 1970, couples living together have doubled in number (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1977).

For those individuals who chose to invest heavily in the emotional, behavioral, and financial aspects of traditional marriage and find themselves bereft of its disintegration, the future holds more promise in services to help buffer the trauma of adjustment. Counseling groups for children as well are taking hold in elementary and high schools. Increasingly, junior colleges and colleges are offering some type of divorce adjustment experience. While loss of a loved one will continue to be painful, the main change will be the emerging support systems designed to help people channel that pain for constructive growth and learning. Elementary school, junior high, high school, and college counselors have already begun to take a major role in this endeavor.

CONCLUSION

This monograph has attempted to present a rationale for the need for divorce counseling and to discuss services that have recently emerged as a result of this need. Financial aid through government monies, a move toward mediation rather than court combat, divorce adjustment groups for adults, and services for children are all part of the growing supports available to families and individuals in transition. The leading edge of these services is cutting through centuries of ignorance in accepting the realities of divorce. These services also reflect an emerging attitude of helping to rehabilitate rather than debilitate those who choose release from a no-longer-viable marriage. Divorce counseling provides the opportunity for individuals and families to recover, to learn from the past, and hopefully, to build toward a better tomorrow.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Legal Services

The American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers
900 Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60611

This organization will be able to suggest lawyers in your community.

Legal Referral Service
(Your City) Bar Association

Look under your city's name in the white pages of the phone book. Your local chapter of the American Bar Association will give you a list of appropriate lawyers.

National Organization for Women (N.O.W.)
National Action Center
425 13th St., Suite 1001
Washington, D.C. 20004

Look under N.O.W. in the white pages. Your local chapter usually has a referral list of competent lawyers as well as information about financial aid and job counseling services for those in transition.

Neighbor Legal Services Programs
Office of Legal Services L 509
Office of Economic Opportunity
1200 19th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20506

Look under your city's name for your local Legal Aid Society. Comprehensive legal services are often provided to very low income people.

Buffer Groups

Parents Without Partners

Over 800 chapters serve communities all over the United States. This organization deals with the education and development of single parent families. See white pages under Parents Without Partners.

YMCA or YWCA

Your local YMCA or YWCA frequently offers legal and counseling services to the public. Inquire at your local chapter.

Church Groups

If Catholic, contact: Rev. Mr. Bernard Dumais
Family Life Division
320 Cathedral Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

If Jewish, contact local Jewish Community Center.

Protestant and nondenominational groups are frequently available.

Counseling Services

(County) Department of Family and Child Services

Counties usually offer family and child services at a nominal cost. Many agencies have divorce counseling.

American Association of Marriage and Family Counselors
225 Yale Avenue
Claremont, California 91711

Check the yellow pages under "Marriage Counselors" for your local listing of licensed marriage and family counselors in private practice.

American Association of Family Conciliation Courts
10015 S.W. Terwilliger Boulevard
Portland, Oregon 97219

This national organization will inform you if you have any local conciliation services. (You can also check with your county courthouse.) Court-related counseling helps with reconciliation and divorce settlement issues.

Beyond Divorce Groups

National Institute for Professional Training in Divorce Counseling
843 Artwood Road, N.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30307

Write to this address for groups that may be offered in your community. These are small support groups designed to build skills in the divorce process.

Continuing Education Departments of Community Colleges or Universities

You will frequently find divorce groups through classes at the University Extension or Continuing Education at low costs.

Community Mental Health Center

Check with your local community mental health center for services.

Miscellaneous Services

Credit:

National Foundation for Consumer Credit
1819 H. Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

Write for free information in handling debts and for the address of the office nearest you.

Mediation and Arbitration:

Family Dispute Section
American Arbitration Association
140 W. 51st Street
New York, New York 10020

Check your white pages for the office nearest you. The recently developed family dispute section provides an alternative to court litigation in divorce. This office mediates settlement on property division, child custody, maintenance and visitation.

Divorce Information:

Father United for Equal Rights
617 Stamford Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21229

Marriage, Divorce and the Family Newsletter
P.O. Box 42
Madison Square Station
New York, New York 10010 $7.70/year

National Task Force on Divorce Reform Newsletter
1925 N. Lynn Street, Suite 800
Rosslyn, Virginia 22209 $3.00/year

SUGGESTED READINGS

Atkin, E., & Rubin, E. Part-time father: A guide for the divorced father. New York: Vanguard Press, 1976.

A fine book which pumps life and enthusiasm into the divorced father's relationship with his children. With compassion, Atkin and Rubin describe the social, practical, and emotional facets of being a "part-time" father.

Campos, L., & McCormick, P. Introduce yourself to transactional analysis: A TA primer. San Francisco, California: Transactional Publications, 1772 Vallejo Street, 94123.

This pamphlet is highly recommended for divorcing persons. It provides a well-written, succinct introduction to transactional analysis. $1.25

Gardner, R. A., M.D. The boy's and girl's book about divorce. New York: Bantam Books, 1971.

This is an exceedingly well-written book for children about dealing with divorce. It is written for the child and offers a great deal of advice in handling relationships with adults.

Gettlemen, S., & Markowitz, J. The courage to divorce. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974.

While this book does not advocate divorce per se, it points out the positive outgrowth of people who go through divorce. It has an excellent chapter on translating divorce to children. While parts of it deny some negative aspects of divorce, other parts encourage dealing with anger and frustration in a constructive way.

Kessler, S. The American way of divorce: Prescription for change. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1975.

The first half of this book offers self-help for some of the emotional problems in the divorce process. The stages of divorce are described with their concomitant emotions. The second half delves into the prevalent guilt in the United States and traces some of the cultural and historical heritage of that guilt.

Krantzler, M. Creative divorce. New York: M. Evans & Company, 1974.

This anecdotal approach to the personal growth potential inherent in divorce offers some advice in making it through the traumatic aspects.

Yates, M. Coping: A survival manual for women alone. New York: Prentice Hall, 1976.

This survival manual (good for both men and women) is jam-packed with useful information. Mortgages, income tax, food stamps, repairs and maintenance, and consumer affairs are but a few of the topic areas.

NOTE

We are including in this monograph a comprehensive bibliography on divorce, just as it was submitted to us by the author. Although it differs in style from the way in which we customarily present such material, the information is there. And we believe that it provides such a comprehensive overview of resources in this area that we would have been highly remiss not to include it. We are grateful to Dr. Kessler for sharing her resource list with us and trust that interested readers will share our view of its worth and use it for further study and exploration of this controversial and complex field.

Garry R. Walz and Libby Benjamin

COMPREHENSIVE

DIVORCE BIBLIOGRAPHY

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